
S P E E C H

OF THE

EARL OF GLANDORE.

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OF THE
EARL OF GLANDORE
IN THE
HOUSE OF LORDS,

ON FRIDAY FEBRUARY 13, 1789.

Upon a Motion to agree with the COMMONS in an Address
to his Royal Highness the PRINCE OF WALES, to take
upon him the REGENCY of this Kingdom, during the
Incapacity of the KING.

D U B L I N:

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M.DCC.LXXXIX.

S P E E C H
OF THE
EARL OF GLANDORE
IN THE
HOUSE OF LORDS,

On Friday February 13th, 1789.

MY LORDS,

THIS is a question of such great importance, involves in it considerations of such magnitude, and tends to consequences so likely to affect the nature of that connection, which subsists between this kingdom and Great Britain, and

upon which, every establishment in this country depends, that before we proceed to a decision, it is incumbent on us to examine with temper, and with caution, how far we are warranted to adopt such a measure, conformably to the principles of our Constitution, to the several statutes, explanatory of it, and to the practice of our Government. That in all our proceedings, we should keep in view those great and leading principles, is what must interest every man, who thinks the connection with Great Britain a benefit to this country, but chiefly, and above all the illustrious personage, who is the object of this address. He is peculiarly concerned in maintaining the unity of that Crown he is destined to wear, and the indissoluble connection of those Kingdoms he is born to govern.

If I understand any thing of the nature of that relation, which this country bears to Great Britain, it is this : The kingdom
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dom of Ireland, though possessing a distinct and independent Legislature, yet in respect of its sovereignty, holds of the Crown of England, and not of the person of the King, is inseparably annexed to that Crown, as declared by statute 33d Hen. VIII. and further declared to be so, by the act 4th William and Mary, which recognizes their Majesties title, and in the contemplation of the law and of the constitution has ever been considered (without derogating from the independence of its Parliament, I believe I am warranted in making use of the expression) as being a part or *parcel* of the dominions of the imperial Crown of England. In this respect differing essentially from the relation, in which Scotland stood to England before the Union. The kingdom of Scotland was a separate, imperial Crown. There the connection was merely accidental, the Crown of England having devolved upon the head of the King of Scotland. Their only connection

connection consisted in their having one common Sovereign, in like manner as England and Hanover have at this day. —But so feeble and precarious was such a bond of connection, that it is now fairly matter of speculation, whether if the Union had not taken place, the crowns of England, and of Scotland would not at this day be upon different heads; for the Scottish Parliament had repeatedly refused to limit the succession of their Crown to the Princess Sophia, the next protestant heir of the royal line; nay they had expressly provided in their famous Act of Security, that the crowns of England and of Scotland should not be worn by the same person upon the eventual demise of the Queen. Foreseeing this, and alarmed at the consequences of having a separate, independent kingdom, governed by its own Sovereign, revived within the island, those great statesmen, Lord Godolphin, and Lord Cowper, co-operating with the Duke of Queensbury, and

and other distinguished characters in Scotland, who entered into the same views, brought about that great work of the Union, a measure unnecessary, at least with respect to the succession to the Crown, had Scotland stood to England in the same relation which Ireland now does.

Our business is not now to reform the Constitution, if any there be who think it may be still farther improved. Our duty in the present exigency, is to act upon it, such as it is acknowledged and defined, and so long as the act the 10th Hen. VII. remains upon the statute book, and is part of the law of this land, it is impossible we can adopt the measure which has been proposed, without departing essentially from the principles of our Constitution. This act was thought to be of such high importance, that in the year 1782, the æra of the liberties of Ireland, when in certain respects, wherein

wherein it was considered, and justly considered as intrenching upon the privileges of Parliament, it was so far forth modified, and explained; yet the main object of that law, which declared it to be indispensable, that before a bill could receive the royal assent here, it should be sent back certified under the Great Seal of England, that part of it was confirmed and re-enacted.

What then are we now called upon to do? To vote an address to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, to assume the Regency of this kingdom, before we have any authority to know, that he is invested with that power, which can enable him to administer the Government; for until he shall have authority to direct the use of the Great Seal of England, he can neither grant a commission for giving the royal assent to a bill here, nor appoint a Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; nor, notwithstanding all that has
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been said to the contrary, in other places, and all the declarations which have been made upon that popular theme of perfect independance; the fact is, that under the actual and existing constitution of this kingdom, it is utterly impracticable, that the functions of the regal office should be exercised for Ireland, by any other person, than him, who is, at the same time, Regent of Great Britain.

That his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, is the only proper person to fill the high office of Regent of Great Britain and Ireland, during the incapacity of the King, is a truth, to which no man in this nation can be more ready to assent than I am: and with respect to what has engaged the attention of other great assemblies, who have been discussing questions of right, and voting abstract propositions, had they proceeded to the exercise of that right, which they asserted to belong to them, and chosen

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any other person, than his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the heir apparent of this hereditary monarchy, to be Regent of Great Britain; it might have been attended with such consequences with respect to this kingdom, as would have amounted to a separation from Great Britain, and a revolution in the State.

But though there is but one opinion amongst us, that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales is the only proper person to fill this high station; yet let us be governed in our proceedings by the laws of the land, and the principles of the Constitution; above all things, keeping in view, that great and capital feature of it, *that the kingdom of Ireland holds of the Crown of England, and not of the Person of the King.* Abandon this, and what becomes of the settlement at the Revolution? The Parliament, which King James the Second held

held in this kingdom, when he sat in that throne, is then a legal Parliament, and all the attainders which passed in it are law.

From the clearest and the fullest conviction, that any proceedings, on the part of this country, which shall in any degree militate against those known, and established principles, must be attended with consequences, the most ruinous, and pernicious to the State, I shall give my vote for postponing the consideration of this address *. With respect to the illustrious Prince, who is the object of it, I will be bold to assert, there is not a man in either kingdom, who entertains higher sentiments of duty and attachment to him, than I do; inferior only to those sentiments of loyalty and allegiance, which I owe to the King his Father. And whilst I offer my most ar-

* That was the question then immediately before the House.

dent wishes, that his Royal Highness and Government may be successful and glorious, I will not press the flattering hope, that the happy day may at length arrive, when it shall please God to restore that most virtuous, and paternal Monarch to the wishes and the prayers of his subjects.

I can have no motive of private consideration, to influence my conduct upon this occasion. The part, which I now take, is, if report be true, not that, which is likely to recommend me to those, who it is expected, will soon be appointed to situations of power; nor have I, on the other hand, the motives of gratitude to sway me, for to the present Administration, I owe no obligation; but if it be true, that *one self-approving hour* can fully compensate for all the rewards, which power, or popularity can bestow, I shall rest satisfied in the consciousness of having discharged
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my duty, as a member of this House, and a subject of this country, in supporting those principles, from which, if we depart, I have the fullest conviction, we shall thereby give a shock to the constitution, and materially alter the nature and frame of our government.

F I N I S.

